

***City of Morgantown***  
**Human Rights Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes March 19, 2015**

<b>Present:</b>	Jan Derry, Chair	Tim Hairston – Liaison/ State HRC
	Fran Whiteman	Bob Jones, Research Consultant
	Marlene Robinson-Savino, Vice Chair	Aaron Kapansky - Research Intern
	Don Spencer, Secretary	

**Meeting called to order** by Jan Derry, Chair, at 6:30 p.m. The meeting agenda was approved without changes. Jan Derry introduced Aaron Kapansky, an intern working on Fair Housing with NWVCIL and would be available to the HRC to assist with EEOC planning.

**Public Session:** No public session attendees were present.

**Communications:** Don Spencer reported receiving a phone call directed to the City Human Rights Commission (HRC). The individual believes that having a safe environment is a human right and is especially concerned about the air quality in the city. The high levels of pollution on many days generate chemical sensitivity which results in asthma especially for the young and susceptibility to different forms of cancer in adults. The person believes the HRC can be effective in advocating for better monitoring and control.

Local demonstrations in response to the shooting of three UNC students were noted. Due to the fact that one of the Muslim students had completed dental education, health professional student have also demonstrated throughout eastern cities in the USA.

An analysis of local housing by Sunnyside-Up was noted as were several articles relating to human rights published in the DP and the DA. The State HRC Conference coming up on March 26 and 27 at Stonewall was reported by Hairston. Spencer will attend to represent the Commission.

An ADA bus traveling throughout the country will be in Morgantown on May 2. Jan Derry and her agency will be hosting the event. A public meeting to discuss long term solutions for the homeless issues in Morgantown will be held on March 26. Don Spencer summarized reports on human rights related bill at the State legislative session.

**Minutes:** On a motion by Marlene Robinson-Savino, seconded by Fran Whiteman, the minutes of the January 15, 2015 meeting were approved as presented. It was noted that no HRC meeting was held in February 2015 due to inclement weather.

**Priority Items:** Bob Jones provided written reports relating to preparations for the Town Hall Meeting coming up on March 25. These reports included a copy of the news release prepared by Chelsi Baker, a list of contacts of agency and institutional representatives

arranged to attend each of the four planning groups, and instructions for the leaders of the planning groups on housing, transportation, wages/jobs and addictions/mental health.

Commissioners and other members made recommendations on persons to whom last minute invitations might be sent. Aaron Kapansky recommended that David Brewster of the WVU Sociology Department be included. Concern was expressed about the apparent lack of certainty relating to group leader attendance. All group leaders were asked to be present by 6:15 p.m. on March 25 for last minutes briefing and discussion of details. It was noted that Dave Bott has made arrangement for payment of the Marilla room rental fee for the Town Hall Meeting.

Jan Derry announced that there will be a Fair Housing Training session for landlords to discuss service animals and pets on April 23 at 9 a.m. The HRC has agreed to cosponsor the event.

No report was provided on the 24/7 HRC phone line. Marlene Robinson will present the message on the call receiver. No report was available on the History of Civil Rights Course Planning.

On a motion by Fran Whiteman, seconded by Marlene Robinson-Savino, the Commission voted to approve the Annual Human Rights Observances Calendar to be placed on the City website.

Tim Hairston announced that on April 16 there will be Fair Housing training sponsored by the State HRC. On a motion by Marlene Robinson-Savino, seconded by Fran Whiteman, City HRC co-sponsorship for the event was approved. It was noted, however, that no meeting place has been selected and no publicity has been yet formally received.

### **Progress Reports:**

Fran Whiteman and Jan Derry reported that the letter on the MEI results had been prepared and distributed to the City Council. Included in the letter was mention that the HRC will be requesting that volunteer liaisons be established with the City manager and Police Department before the next submission of information related to the MEI submission by/for Morgantown. Don Spencer offered to meet with Fran Whiteman to work on wording for the job descriptions which would be involved.

Although Dave Bott was not present at the meeting, Don Spencer thinks that the HRC requests for CDBG funds for 2015-2016 has been completed due to an existing residue in the HRC funds from 2014-2015. This assumption will need to be confirmed with Bott upon his return to the office from travel.

Marlene Robinson-Savino presented a written report on work of the Diversity Representation Committee. The Committee has completed interviews with City staff on hiring procedures and prepared several recommendations. A draft of these eleven recommendations has been shared with the City Manager. To address the projected work of the HRC and the Diversity Representation Committee in supporting the City

fulfillment of the recommendations needs to involve 10 projects. These projects were presented as follows:

1. *Recruit a graduate WVU intern who can assist the Committee with the following projects.*
2. *Develop a mission statement for City Affirmative Action which values diversity in its employed and volunteer staffing.*
3. *Profile diversity in City census population by number and percentages.*
4. *Profile the baseline for existing diversity along city staff and volunteers, department by department and overall as well as for each and all boards and commissions.*
5. *Generate an email list of contact organizations which can be used for outreach notification relating to vacancies.*
6. *Research best practices in required and optional City personnel policies relating to Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, and diversity with the assistance of the WVU Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.*
7. *Review the City Personnel Plan and articulate recommendations for up-grades as needed.*
8. *Review City's volunteer management plan and generate recommendations for improvement.*
9. *Research best practices in municipal Affirmative Action Plans.*
10. *Draft an update for the City's Affirmative Action Plan.*

In regard to the matter of seeking a stipend for the work of Aaron Kapansky, this matter will be discussed with Dave Bott and with the City Manager.

Don Spencer reported that WVU staffers Bruce Mitchell and Sharon Mallow have been assigned by David Fryson of the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to work on the Annual Human Rights Film Festival. The planning committee for the festival has yet to be activated. Funding from the endowment for the festival will become available soon.

**Regular Meeting Items:** In planning the April HRC meeting, the members present all indicated that they had conflicts on the regular HRC meeting date which would normally be April 16. Accordingly it was agreed that if an alternative meeting room could be located for Wednesday, April 15, the meeting date would be changed to April 15.

The meeting was adjourned by the chair at 8:30 p.m.